

REMARKS

This responds to the Office Action mailed March 1, 2004.

Pending Claims

The Office Action indicates that claims 1-36 are pending in the application. It is respectfully submitted that claims 1-39 were presented in the international stage. As such, it is believed that claims 1-39 are now pending in the application as listed above.

Claims 1-9 and 20-36

Claims 1-9 and 20-36 have been amended and are submitted to define applicant's method/process clearly and definitely, with recitation of positive step limitations. It is respectfully submitted that these claims, as amended, are now in good condition for examination.

Restriction Requirement

The applicant respectfully traverses the restriction requirement. It is believed that the restriction requirement is based upon the Ruch patent and the Examiner's contention that it discloses the special technical feature of the present invention. It is respectfully submitted that amended independent claims 1, 11, 20 and 37 and the claims that depend respectively therefrom define patentably over the Ruch patent, despite the portions of the Ruch disclosure referenced by the Examiner. Each independent claim includes limitations not disclosed or fairly suggested in the Ruch patent and, thus, all claims share the special technical relationship required by the Examiner. Examination of all pending claims is respectfully

requested.

Provisional Election

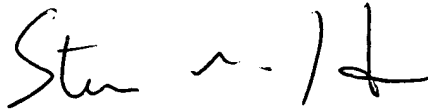
In the event the Examiner maintains the restriction requirement, the applicant desires to prosecute claims 1-10 and 20-36 drawn to "use of a recording sheet in a digital printing process." The Examiner was originally unable to group claims 1-9 and 20-36, but the amendments made herein are believed to overcome this difficulty and place these claims in Group I with claim 10.

If the Examiner requires an election of Group I or Group II from the March 1, 2004 Office Action, the applicant elects the claims of Group I, which is submitted to include claim 10 and also claims 1-9 and 20-36 as amended herein.

Conclusion

An action on the merits with respect to claims 1-39 is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Steven M. Haas (Reg. No. 37,841)
Fay, Sharpe, Fagan, Minnich & McKee, LLP
1100 Superior Avenue - Seventh Floor
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-2518
Telephone (216) 861-5582
Facsimile (216) 241-1666